



City of
Indianapolis

Greg Ballard, Mayor

RENEWAL APPLICATION PACKET
for Mayor-Sponsored Charter Schools

2nd Edition
Summer 2009

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Charter School Renewal Application Packet

Mayor's Office of Indianapolis

Introduction

A charter school sponsored by the Mayor's Office of Indianapolis may apply for charter renewal anytime prior to the first day of September in the seventh year of its charter. For each school seeking renewal, the Mayor will issue a decision by the end of January the school's seventh year of operation.

The charter renewal decision is based on a strong array of evidence built over the charter term pertaining to the four Critical Questions set forth in the Performance Framework for Mayor-sponsored charter schools:

1. *Is the educational program a success?*
2. *Is the organization effective and well-run?*
3. *Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?*
4. *Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?*

In addition, a fifth important area of focus for the renewal application and decision is the school's *strategies for sustaining success and continuing to improve* over the next charter term.

The Mayor's Office requires charter schools to apply for renewal to fulfill two key purposes: (1) To present any important new or supplemental information pertaining to the above Critical Questions, to enable a more comprehensive assessment of school performance; and (2) To articulate school strategies and capacities for sustaining success and continuing to improve over the next charter term.

The renewal application is not meant to be a redundant exercise. Accordingly, schools should *not* use the renewal application to recite data or history already known to the Mayor's Office. The Mayor's Office will base its evaluation of each school's performance on the body of data amassed over the charter term, with emphasis on the most recent data (including findings from the fourth-year review and the school's responses to any below-standard findings in that review) and attention to trends. The extensive evidence already collected allows each school's renewal application to be substantially streamlined. Therefore, renewal applications should focus on providing only *new* or *supplemental* information for the Mayor's Office, as well as on describing the school's long-term sustainability and plans for ongoing improvement.

The renewal application should be concise and complete, not requiring further explanation or clarification by the school. All necessary documentation should be included as attachments, which should be limited to information that a) meaningfully augments the body of evidence the Mayor's Office has already collected on the school's performance, and/or b) illustrates or supports plans or strategies discussed in the application.

This Renewal Application Packet provides general content guidance and submission instructions for each school's renewal application. The Mayor's Office advises schools to **follow the content guidance carefully**. Doing so will enable each school to assemble a well-focused application that will be most helpful to its case for renewal, while avoiding redundant material and unnecessary work for the school.

In addition to the general guidance contained in this packet, the Mayor's Office will meet with each school's leadership to discuss particular information that the school should prepare for its renewal application, tailored to the school's circumstances.

Content Overview

The primary content of each school's renewal application should provide clear and succinct narrative responses to the Critical Questions outlined in this packet (starting on p. 8). The Critical Questions are divided into two sections:

1. **Section A: Performance Review.** This section is *required for some* schools, and *optional* for others (explained below).
2. **Section B: Sustainability and Improvement.** This section is *required for all* schools.

Following is an overview of the expectations for each section.

Section A: Performance Review

Section A of the Critical Questions focuses on the four key inquiries and accompanying sub-questions of the Performance Framework for Mayor-sponsored charter schools. In forming its charter renewal recommendations, the Mayor's Office will review each school's cumulative body of evidence in all areas of the Performance Framework.

Which schools must respond to Section A?

The Mayor's Office will provide each school with a letter indicating whether and how it must respond to Section A. Generally, Section A will be *required* for any school that did not meet standards (i.e., obtained a rating of "Does Not Meet Standard" or "Approaching Standard") in any area of the Performance Framework in its fourth-year review or that has since been found by the Mayor's Office to be below standard in any area.

If your school is in this category, you should explain progress in the particular areas in which the school previously did not meet standard, providing clear evidence demonstrating that the school now meets the standard. Alternatively, schools that do not yet meet the standard for a particular area should a) note why, b) detail the steps you have taken and plan to take in order to ensure attainment of the standard, and c) explain the timeline on which you expect to meet the standard.

In explaining attainment of or progress toward standards, *refer specifically* to the standards and criteria set forth in the Performance Framework rubrics in the Accountability Handbook. You may limit responses for Section A to areas indicated by the Mayor's Office, generally those in which the school did not meet standards in the fourth-year review or in subsequent reviews by the Mayor's Office.

Which schools may respond to Section A?

Responding to the Critical Questions in Section A is *not required* for schools that were rated as "Meeting Standard" in *all* areas (including sub-questions) of the Performance Framework in their fourth-year review and have not been found to be sub-standard in any subsequent reviews, and that are comfortable being judged by the relevant data on record with the Mayor's Office.

If, however, you would like to provide supplemental data or contextual information to augment your school's record with the Mayor's Office for any areas of the Performance Framework, you may do so by responding to the relevant questions within Section A. Provide compelling evidence to support any responses of this nature.

Section B. Sustainability and Improvement

All schools are required to respond to the Critical Questions in Section B.

Renewal Process

Once a school submits its renewal application, the process of renewal decision-making will proceed as follows:

Statement of Intent to Seek Renewal

[Due by the first day of September of the school's 7th academic year]

School submits Statement of Intent to Seek Renewal. The statement should be a letter on school letterhead signed by the chair of the school's board stating the school's intent to seek renewal of its charter. The statement does not need to provide any details or plans, all of which will be contained in the Renewal Application, described below.

Renewal Application Preparation Meeting

Mayor's Office meets with school leadership (designees of the board and

administration) to discuss particular information required for the school's renewal application.
Mayor's Office Provides School with Guidance Letter The Mayor's Office provides the school with a letter summarizing the items discussed at the preparation meeting, providing customized guidance for the school's renewal application.
School Submits Renewal Application School submits renewal application to Mayor's Office.
Renewal Application Review Mayor's Office reviews renewal application, collects any additional data needed, and prepares draft renewal report on the school.
Draft Renewal Reports Provided to School Mayor's Office provides draft report to the school for review.
School Responds to Draft Report School submits in writing any comments, corrections or clarifications in response to draft report.
Public Hearing Public hearing on the charter renewal application held by Charter Schools Board. Applicant for renewal makes short presentations; Charter School Board members have opportunity to ask questions; public has opportunity to comment.
Renewal Reports and Recommendation Provided to Mayor Mayor's Office presents renewal report (with corrections or clarifications as appropriate) and recommendation to Mayor.
Mayor's Decision

Dates for each phase of the renewal process will be provided in writing to the school.

All decisions concerning renewal of a school's charter shall be made at the discretion of the Mayor in accordance with applicable law.¹ Renewal decisions will be issued by the end of January in each school's seventh year of operation.

Non-Renewal

In the event of non-renewal, the Mayor's Office will follow a closure protocol to guide the closure process.

¹ See Charter School Agreement, Section 1.3.

Submission Instructions

Charter renewal applications must be submitted to the Mayor's Office in **both print and electronic form**.

Submit the full application in a single electronic document, including all attachments and certifications, to: Karega Rausch, Indianapolis Charter Schools Director, at krausch@indygov.org

In addition, submit twenty (20) print copies of the application, including all attachments and certifications, to:

Mayor's Office of Indianapolis
Attn: Karega Rausch, Indianapolis Charter Schools Director
2501 City County Building
200 E. Washington Street
Indianapolis IN 46201

Format

- The renewal application narrative should not exceed 30 pages, excluding the School Overview, Executive Summary and attachments.
- The application should include a completed School Overview (provided in this packet) and an Executive Summary not to exceed two pages.
- Attachments should not exceed 25 pages.
- The application must include the Assurances Statement included in this packet. The statement must be signed by the Chair of the school's Board of Trustees.
- The application should have standard one-inch margins, be clearly paginated, and use no smaller than an 11-point font. Application pages may be double-sided.
- The application should be free of jargon, undefined terms, and unexplained references.
- Tables, graphs, and other data in the application must be clearly presented, clearly explained, and directly relevant to the text.
- Any attachment should provide information that a) meaningfully augments the body of evidence the Mayor's Office has already collected on the school's performance, or b) illustrates or supports plans or strategies discussed in Section B of the application. In addition, any attachment should be clearly referenced in the application and directly relevant to that part of the text.
- The application should not include any photographs, pictures or news clips unless directly relevant to the text.
- The electronic and print versions of the application should be identical in content, including all attachments and certifications. For the electronic version, consolidate all sections into a single document for submission.

Charter Renewal Application Checklist

The renewal application should contain the following elements in the order shown:

- ✓ **School Overview** (*complete the sheet provided in this packet*)
- ✓ **Executive Summary** (*not to exceed two pages*)
- ✓ **Narrative Responses for Section A: Performance Review**
(*if applicable – see guidance*)
 - 1. Is the educational program a success?
 - 2. Is the organization effective and well-run?
 - 3. Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?
 - 4. Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?
- ✓ **Narrative Responses for Section B: Sustainability and Improvement**
- ✓ **Assurances Statement**
- ✓ **Attachments**

Charter School Renewal Application
School Overview

School Name:
School Address:
Mission Statement:
School Leader/Principal:
Chair, Board of Directors:
Current Grades Served:
Current Enrollment:
Grade Span for Next Charter Term:
Maximum Enrollment for Next Charter Term:

Charter Renewal Application: Critical Questions

Not all schools are required to respond to the Critical Questions in Section A. Review the guidance for each question to determine whether your school must – or may wish to – respond.

Section A: Performance Review

1. Is the educational program a success?

To determine whether each school’s educational program is a success meriting charter renewal, the Mayor’s Office will review the school’s performance in each of the below areas set forth in the Performance Framework, applying the criteria detailed in the Framework rubrics:

- 1.1. *Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress (AYP), as measured by the Indiana Department of Education’s system of accountability?*
- 1.2. *Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis?*
- 1.3. *Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?*
- 1.4. *Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?*

The Mayor’s Office will review each school’s cumulative body of evidence in these areas over the current charter term, including annual assessment data, site visit reports, and performance on school-specific goals, if applicable.

Any schools that did not meet standards (i.e., obtained a rating of “Does Not Meet Standard” or “Approaching Standard”) in any of the above-outlined areas in their fourth-year review by the Mayor’s Office are *required* to explain their progress in these particular areas. If your school is in this category, you should provide clear evidence demonstrating that the school now meets the standard.

Alternatively, schools that do not yet meet the standard for a particular area should a) note why, b) detail the steps you have taken and plan to take in order to ensure attainment of the standard, and c) explain the timeline on which you expect to meet the standard. In explaining attainment of or progress toward standards, *refer specifically* to the standards and criteria set forth in the Performance Framework rubrics in the Accountability Handbook.

In addition, if you would like to provide supplemental data or contextual information to augment your school's record with the Mayor's Office for any of the above-outlined areas of the Performance Framework, you may do so. Provide compelling evidence to support any responses of this nature.

Schools that were rated as "Meeting Standard" (i.e., obtained a rating of "Meets Standard" or "Exceeds Standard") in all the above-outlined areas of the Performance Framework in their fourth-year review, and are comfortable being judged by the relevant data on record with the Mayor's Office, are not required to respond to this content section.

2. Is the organization effective and well-run?

To determine whether each charter school is organizationally effective and well-run, the Mayor's Office will review the school's cumulative body of evidence in each of the below areas set forth in the Performance Framework, applying the criteria detailed in the Framework rubrics:

- 2.1. *Is the school in sound fiscal health?*
- 2.2. *Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?*
- 2.3. *Is the school's board active and competent in its oversight?*
- 2.4. *Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?*
- 2.5. *Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?*
- 2.6. *Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?*

Any schools that did not meet standards (i.e., obtained a rating of "Does Not Meet Standard" or "Approaching Standard") in any of the above-outlined areas in their fourth-year review by the Mayor's Office are *required* to explain their progress in these particular areas. If your school is in this category, you should provide clear evidence demonstrating that the school now meets the standard.

Alternatively, schools that do not yet meet the standard for a particular area should a) note why, b) detail the steps you have taken and plan to take in order to ensure attainment of the standard, and c) explain the timeline on which you expect to meet the standard. In explaining attainment of or progress toward standards, schools should *refer specifically* to the standards and criteria set forth in the Performance Framework rubrics in the Accountability Handbook.

In addition, if you would like to provide supplemental data or contextual information to augment your school's record with the Mayor's Office for any of the above-outlined areas of the Performance Framework, you may do so. Provide compelling evidence to support any responses of this nature.

Schools that were rated as "Meeting Standard" (i.e., obtained a rating of "Meets Standard" or "Exceeds Standard") in all the above-outlined areas of the Performance Framework in their fourth-year review, and are comfortable being judged by the relevant data on record with the Mayor's Office, are not required to respond to this content section.

3. Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?

To determine whether each charter school is meeting its operations and access obligations, the Mayor's Office will review the school's cumulative body of evidence in each of the below areas set forth in the Performance Framework, applying the criteria detailed in the Framework rubrics:

- 3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational structure and governance obligations?*
- 3.2. Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning?*
- 3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?*
- 3.4. Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?*
- 3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?*

Any schools that did not meet standards (i.e., obtained a rating of "Does Not Meet Standard" or "Approaching Standard") in any of the above-outlined areas in their fourth-year review by the Mayor's Office are *required* to explain their progress in these particular areas. If your school is in this category, you should provide clear evidence demonstrating that the school now meets the standard.

Alternatively, schools that do not yet meet the standard for a particular area should a) note why, b) detail the steps you have taken and plan to take in order to ensure attainment of the standard, and c) explain the timeline on which you expect to meet the standard. In explaining attainment of or progress toward standards, *refer specifically* to the standards and criteria set forth in the Performance Framework rubrics in the Accountability Handbook.

In addition, if you would like to provide supplemental data or contextual information to augment your school's record with the Mayor's Office for any of the above-outlined areas of the Performance Framework, you may do so. Provide compelling evidence to support any responses of this nature.

Schools that were rated as "Meeting Standard" (i.e., obtained a rating of "Meets Standard" or "Exceeds Standard") in all the above-outlined areas of the Performance Framework in their fourth-year review, and are comfortable being judged by the relevant data on record with the Mayor's Office, are not required to respond to this content section.

4. Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

To determine whether each charter school is providing the appropriate conditions for success, the Mayor's Office will review the school's performance in each of the below areas set forth in the Performance Framework, applying the criteria detailed in the Framework rubrics:

4.1 Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?

4.2 Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?

4.3 For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?

4.4 Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?

4.5 Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?

4.6 Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?

4.7 Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?

4.8 Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?

Any schools that did not meet standards (i.e., obtained a rating of "Does Not Meet Standard" or "Approaching Standard") in any of the above-outlined areas in their fourth-year review by the Mayor's Office are *required* to explain their progress in these particular areas. If your school is in this category, you should provide clear evidence demonstrating that the school now meets the standard.

Alternatively, schools that do not yet meet the standard for a particular area should a) note why, b) detail the steps you have taken and plan to take in order to ensure attainment

of the standard, and c) explain the timeline on which you expect to meet the standard. In explaining attainment of or progress toward standards, *refer specifically* to the standards and criteria set forth in the Performance Framework rubrics in the Accountability Handbook.

In addition, if you would like to provide supplemental data or contextual information to augment your school's record with the Mayor's Office for any of the above-outlined areas of the Performance Framework, you may do so. Provide compelling evidence to support any responses of this nature.

Schools that were rated as "Meeting Standard" (i.e., obtained a rating of "Meets Standard" or "Exceeds Standard") in all the above-outlined areas of the Performance Framework in their fourth-year review, and are comfortable being judged by the relevant data on record with the Mayor's Office, are not required to respond to this content section.

Section B: Sustainability and Improvement

All schools applying for renewal are required to respond to the following items, describing how you will sustain success and continue to improve over the next charter term. Responses should demonstrate that the school is planning carefully and strategically for the future and has the capacity to achieve long-term success.

In addition to the general areas noted below and based on concerns in previous years, the Mayor's Office may identify particular matters for each school to address in this section.

1. Sustaining Success

Describe your school's plans and strategies for sustaining and continuing to build academic, organizational and operational success over the next charter term. Explain how the school will build and achieve long-term sustainability and success in:

- a. The governing board
- b. The leadership team
- c. The teaching staff
- d. Any other areas that the Mayor's Office has asked your school to discuss, or that you wish to discuss

In describing these strategies for sustaining success, specify implementation timelines or timeframes as well as responsible individuals or parties.

2. Ongoing Improvement

Describe how your school will continue to improve academically, organizationally and operationally over the next charter term. Identify particular weaknesses, challenges and areas for improvement, and detail the school's plans for addressing each of these needs.

Responses here should demonstrate that the school has reflected honestly and critically on areas and ways to improve. In describing these plans and strategies for ongoing improvement, specify implementation timelines or timeframes as well as responsible individuals or parties.

Attachments

Required Attachments

- **Assurances Statement [form provided below]**
- **Five-year budget [form provided below]**

Optional Attachments *(not to exceed 25 pages)*

Schools may attach additional information that a) meaningfully augments the body of evidence the Mayor's Office has already collected on the school's performance, or b) illustrates or supports plans or strategies discussed in Section B. Any attachment should be clearly referenced in the application and directly relevant to that part of the text.

Assurances Statement

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant for renewal and submitted with the Renewal Application. An application will be considered incomplete if it is not accompanied by the Assurances Form signed by an authorized individual.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for charter renewal for _____ (name of school) to be located at _____ (location of school) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further I understand that, if awarded a renewal, the school:

1. will not charge tuition, fees, or other mandatory payments for attendance at the charter school, or for participation in its programs, except for a preschool program or a latch key program. IC 20-5.5-8-2
2. will enroll any eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the school receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case, each timely applicant will be given equal chance of admission. IC 20-5.5-5-4
3. will provide the number of students enrolled in the charter school, the name of each student and the school corporation in which each student resides to the Indiana Department of Education by the date established thereby. IC 20-5.5-7-3
4. will submit an annual report to the Indiana Department of Education in the form required thereby. IC 20-5.5-9-1
5. will submit attendance records, student performance data, financial information, any information necessary to comply with state and federal government requirements, and any other information specified in the charter to the Mayor's Office. IC 20-5.5-9-5
6. will participate in the Indiana State Teachers' Retirement Fund in accordance with IC 21-6.1 and the Public Employees Retirement Fund in accordance with IC 5-10.3. IC 20-5.5-6-7, and/or another comparable and appropriate pension or retirement fund approved by the Mayor's Office.
7. will maintain separate accountings of all funds received and disbursed by the school. IC 20-5.5-7-1
8. will employ individuals who teach that hold a license to teach in a public school in Indiana under I.C. 20-6.1-3 or are in the process of obtaining a license to teach in a public school in Indiana under the transition to teaching program set forth in IC 20-6.1-3.11. IC 20-5.5-6-5
9. will permit certified employees at the charter school the opportunity to organize and bargain collectively under I.C. 20-7.5. IC 20-5.5-6-3
10. will operate with the organizer serving in the capacity of fiscal agent for the charter school and in compliance with generally accepted government accounting principles.
11. will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.

12. will indemnify and hold harmless the City of Indianapolis (including without limitation, the Mayor's Office), the State of Indiana, all school corporations providing funds to the charter school, and their officers, directors, agents and employees, and any successors and assigns from any and all liability, cause of action, or other injury or damage in any way relating to the charter school or its operation.
13. will follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions that prohibit discrimination on the basis of the following: disability, race, color, gender, national origin, religion and ancestry. IC 20-5.5-2-2
14. will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including the IDEA, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, that are applicable to it.
15. will be non-religious in its programs, admissions policies, governance, employment practices and all other operations, and its curriculum will be completely secular.
16. will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient (LEP), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, that are applicable to it.
17. will follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the applicant or the operation of the charter school.

Authorized Representative's Signature

Date

Five-Year Budget Template for Charter Renewal

Name of Charter School: _____

Fiscal Year **Fiscal Year** **Fiscal Year** **Fiscal Year** **Fiscal Year**
 _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
 _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

I. Revenues					
Carry-over from previous period	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Per Pupil Payments					
State Grants					
Federal Grants					
Private Funds					
Other (Briefly detail)					
Total Revenues	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
II. Expenditures					
Human Resources					
Director/Principal Salary					
Supervisors/Lead Teachers Salaries					
Teachers (FT) Salaries					
Teachers (PT) Salaries					
Clerical Salaries					
Custodial Salaries					
Consultants Salaries/Contracts					
Other (Admin. Staff) Salaries					
Payroll Taxes					
Benefits					
Professional Development					
Substitute Teachers					
Board Recruitment					
Board Development					
Other Human Resources Expenses					
Total Human Resources	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Facility					
Rent					
Mortgage					
Renovation/Construction					
Debt Service (Please specify outstanding loan obligations)					
Utilities					

Maintenance					
Other Facility Expenses					
Total Facility	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Materials/Supplies/Equipment					
Textbooks and Other Instructional Supplies					
Assessments					
Instructional Equipment					
Classroom Technology					
Office Technology					
Instructional Software					
Office Software					
Library					
Office Furniture					
Classroom Furniture					
Other Equipment					
Copying and Reproduction					
Postage and Shipping					
Telephone/Fax Lines					
Long Distance Telephone Expenses					
Internet Access					
Other Materials/Supplies/Equipment					
Total Materials/Supplies/Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Additional Costs					
Contracted Services					
Business Services					
Insurance					
Marketing/Development					
Legal Expenses					
Accounting/Audit					
Transportation					
Field Trips					
Food Service					
Other					
Total Additional Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Revenues	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Expenditures	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Balance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00